

**After 24 reports, a simple question: Have you lost your minds?**

**To Blacksburg, VA, Madison, MS, then Home at Pensacola, FL**

On March 18, 2010, USM Pilots' Trip Log reported that **no passengers** were aboard N777AQ for a 2.4 hour flight to Blacksburg, VA at a cost of \$14,850.43 (2.4 x \$6,187.67). Martha Saunders boarded N777AQ at Blacksburg, VA and flew 2.2 hours to Madison, MS at a cost of \$13,612.87 (2.2 x \$6,187.67). Chad Driskell, Executive Assistant to President Saunders for External Affairs, and Mike Lambert boarded N777AQ and flew with Martha Saunders 1.0 hours to Pensacola, FL at a cost of \$6,187.67. Martha Saunders has a home located in Pensacola, FL. The plane with its two pilots, Cunningham and Price, flew .7 hours to Hattiesburg, MS with **no passengers** at a cost of \$4,331.37 (.7 x \$6,187.67). The total cost to taxpayers, USM students and faculty of the flights of N777AQ on March 18, 2010 was 6.3 flight hours x \$6,187.67 = **\$38,982.32**.

The Interdepartmental Invoice reports that the March 18, 2010 flight of N777AQ was "6.3 hours round trip Blacksburg, VA/Jackson, MS/Pensacola, FL for Dr. Saunders SACS Reaffirmation Visit/Bond Requests meetings. The charge for the flight according to the Interdepartmental Invoice was the "President's Office"—that is, taxpayers and USM students and faculty.

King Air N777AQ Trip Log

Date(s)                      Destination(s)                      Passenger Name(s)

3-18-10    Virginia Tech Blacksburg, VA                      \_\_\_\_\_

Ldgs 1    Cycles 1    Pilots Cunningham, Price    Bus. ☒    Trng \_\_\_\_\_    Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbs Mtr    In 1703.2    Out 1700.8 = 2.4 hrs total

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Date                      Destination(s)                      Passenger Names

3-18-10    Madison, MS                      M. Sauters

Ldgs 1    Cycles 1    Pilots Cunningham, Price    Bus. ☒    Trng \_\_\_\_\_    Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbs Mtr    In 1765.4    Out 1763.2 = 2.2 hrs total

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Date                      Destination(s)                      Passenger Names

3-18-10    Ferraville, FL                      B. Sanders, Chad Dorell, Mike Lambert

Ldgs 1    Cycles 1    Pilots Cunningham, Price    Bus. ☒    Trng \_\_\_\_\_    Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbs Mtr    In ~~1706.4~~    Out 1765.4 = 1.0 hrs total

King Air N777AQ Trip Log

Date(s)                      Destination(s)                      Passenger Name(s)

3-18-10                      Hattiesburg, MS                      NONE

Ldgs 1    Cycles 1    Pilots Cunningham, Price    Bus. ☒    Trng \_\_\_\_\_    Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbs Mtr    In 1707.1    Out 1706.4    = 0.7 hrs total

Date                      Destination(s)                      Passenger Names

3-24-10                      Myrtle Beach                      NONE

Ldgs 1    Cycles 1    Pilots Allen, Price    Bus. ☒    Trng \_\_\_\_\_    Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbs Mtr    In 1709.2    Out 1707.1    = 2.1 hrs total

Date                      Destination(s)                      Passenger Names

3-24-10                      Hattiesburg, MS                      M. Saunders

Ldgs 1    Cycles 1    Pilots Allen, Price    Bus. ☒    Trng \_\_\_\_\_    Maintenance \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbs Mtr    In 1711.4    Out 1709.2    = 2.6 hrs total

[illegible]

## Context

If you are a new reader of this series, catch up by reviewing [A Brief History of Saunders' "Lease" of airplane N777AQ During a Recession, Part 1](#). That report provides background information concerning the actual costs for the first 17 months of an airplane N777AQ leased by President Saunders for a 60-month period. For example, USM documents report total actual cost of **\$591,231.71** during the first 17 months of airplane N777AQ operations.

Interdepartmental Invoices for 30 flights were provided in an initial response from USM to a MORA request concerning the airplane President Saunders leases and pays for with Mississippi taxpayer and student dollars. Although the MORA request was for all records related to the plane, USM's response was incomplete. When legal counsel followed up concerning the inadequate response, the University produced more documents. [usmnews.net](#) reporters are currently reviewing the additional documents and there are reasons to believe the response was again incomplete.

## **WHO'S MONITORING THESE "PUBLIC SERVANTS"?**

The incomplete response to our MORA request, as exemplified above, signals irresponsible accountability and questionable use of taxpayer, student, and faculty resources.

Is anyone holding USM and IHL administrators accountable? IHL members blessed the lease/purchase of the plane. Why not? IHL members are enjoying the use of the plane **at no cost**. So, do not expect the IHL to do its oversight responsibility and hold President Saunders accountable for this extravagant expenditure of USM student and faculty resources. **And, she's giving it away at the same time she's terminating USM academic programs and faculty.** Unless USM faculty and students take charge of their destiny, President Saunders will continue to implement her own vision which, increasingly does not include them.

Stay tuned to [usmnews.net](#) for cost analyses of the remaining flights aboard President Saunders' plane.